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23 September 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, United States Intelligence Board

SUBJECT: U-2 Coverage of the Sino-Indian Border

REFERENCE: USIB-D-41.14/261; COMOR-D-25/186

1. Problem: To consider whether there continues to be an urgent need for U-2 coverage of the Sino-Indian border.

2. Facts Bearing on the Problem. There is a requirement to obtain coverage of the entire Sino-Indian border during this autumn. The urgency for achieving such coverage may have lessened since the cease-fire, the passing of the ChiCom ultimatum deadline without serious incident, and reports of signs of a relaxation in Chinese Communist military alert status in western Sinkiang and Tibet. However, the situation remains tense and ChiCom intentions are uncertain.

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4. Conclusion. Although the urgency for coverage appears to have lessened, COMOR concludes that coverage is needed since the Chinese could on very short notice initiate hostile action against India. The NEFA is one prime area where this might occur, and the present basing of the U-2 at Ban Takhli would suggest that a prudent course is to cover these targets first. Furthermore, the risk is minimized because there is no need to overfly India.

5. Recommendations. COMOR recommends that:

a. The targets in the NEFA area be covered as soon as feasible without overflying India.*

b. Plans be kept current for coverage of the entire Sino-Indian border area, including Ladakh, so that coverage may be obtained on short notice.

c. The present weekly report on South China be expanded to include target coverage in the Sino-Indian border area, the remaining targets to be covered, and the urgency of such coverage.



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Chairman
Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance

*The State member concurs in the intelligence requirement, subject to further political consideration of the factors involved in a particular mission.

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